

DOES G-D EXIST? COMPELLING ARGUMENTS FOR THE CONTEMPORARY JEW

by Rabbi Dr. Nachum Amsel January 10, 2019

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Why in the world would a topic like this be put in a book about Jewish values? Wouldn't G-d's existence and the debate about it be more suitable to a book of Jewish philosophy or Jewish theology? But the truth is that for a Jew who believes in G-d, his or her value system, ethical values and actions are quite different from a Jew who does not believe in or is not certain of the existence of a Supreme Being. Although that person is not less of a Jew, the moral compass of such a person is (or should be) quite unlike someone who believes in G-d and lives life based on that belief. In addition, for the Jew, if the Divinity of the Torah can be proven, then the context of observing the commandments and following the dictates of the Torah change radically. So, these questions are indeed central to any volume that concerns itself with Jewish values and ethics.

CAN G-D'S EXISTENCE BE PROVEN?

The short answer to this essential question of life is "no." We will see that, by its very definition, G-d's absolute existence cannot be proven, and that is precisely how G-d and Judaism desire the situation to remain. Doubt is a necessary part of faith, and the entire structure of Judaism would be altered if G-d's existence could be undeniably demonstrated. Why is this so?

First, the nature of "proof" itself needs to be examined. One definition of the concept of "proof" is "evidence that compels the mind to accept an assertion as true." Normally, when we speak of evidence in the 21st century, it signifies physical evidence (like forensic evidence in a murder trial), based on accepted scientific methodology. And therein lies the first problem with proving G-d's existence. Proving something physical using scientific proof is a valid approach in the physical world. But since G-d, by definition, is a non-physical, spiritual Being, proving G-d's existence scientifically is impossible. As a non-physical Being, G-d cannot be seen, felt, touched or measured, which are all qualities needed in using the scientific method to prove anything in the physical world. Therefore, utilizing physical evidence in order to prove the non-physical existence of G-d is, logically and practically, unachievable, and "proving" G-d's existence in this manner is impossible.

In addition to this obstacle, there is a very "Jewish" reason that G-d's existence cannot and should not be proven. One of the mainstays of Jewish belief is that every human being has total free will to act as he or she pleases... Without this concept of true free will, there would be no morality or notion of reward and punishment. Not only is physical free will guaranteed for each human being, but in today's world, psychological free will is also a must, in order not to "force" a human being to act one way or another, even due to non-physical pressure. (See the chapter about "Miracles.") Therefore, if G-d's existence could be proven beyond the shadow of a doubt and every person in the world would be completely convinced 100% that there is a G-d, people would be afraid to act in an immoral fashion due to worry about punishment. This would compromise free will, and ethical behavior would take place everywhere, not because people believe it is the right way to act, but only because of their fear of punishment from G-d.

This is not how G-d wishes us to run our lives. Therefore, there must always remain some small doubt about G-d's existence and active involvement in the world, in order to allow people to make moral decisions of their own free will, and to be rewarded or punished for these decisions. This ambivalence between believing in G-d and "knowing" that G-d exists through logical deduction can be seen in the wording of Maimonides in the introductions to two of his seminal works. In his book of Jewish law, the very first words of Maimonides describe the commandment to "know G-d exists."¹ This implies a logical understanding of G-d, arrived at through proofs

¹ Maimonides, Hilchot Yesodai HaTorah, Introduction and 1:1

leading to this conclusion. Yet in his Book of Commandments, Maimonides begins the very first commandment with the words, “The very first commandment is that Jews are commanded to believe in the concept of G-d.”² The great philosopher, Maimonides apparently understood that, absolute proof of G-d’s existence is impossible, and that belief was also a necessary component in being a practicing Jew.

If G-d cannot be proven, what then is left to do? Although G-d’s existence cannot be ascertained as fact, there are many ideas that seem to show that the existence of G-d is a much more logical conclusion than concluding that G-d does not exist. (Since there can be no absolute proofs, these logical presentations are called “Arguments for the Existence of G-d.”) Therefore, numerous arguments are offered below in a condensed form, showing why it is more logical to assume that G-d exists and that He is actively involved in the world, rather than to harbor a belief in a world that is completely random, lacking existence of the Divine. Some of these arguments are “classical” arguments for G-d’s existence, and some were presented by non-Jewish theologians. While each of these arguments may be far from conclusive individually, taken together they seem to point out to any rational and open-minded person seeking truth that belief in G-d makes more sense than living in denial, with a conviction that the universe is devoid of a Supreme Being.

THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

Logically, there are three explanations for the existence of the universe and the world (earth): (1) it came into existence by itself, randomly, or (2) someone (or some being) actually created it, or (3) it was always there. Since everything else that exists in the physical realm on earth has a cause or creator, then it is much more logical to say that the world itself was also created rather than that it just happened suddenly, accidentally or by itself. Today, most scientists, including those who do not necessarily believe in G-d, seem to agree that the universe came into existence in one instant, which is referred to as “The Big Bang.” But scientists have not been able to explain how or why or who caused that Big Bang at that particular moment. This argument says that if there was a Big Bang, then it is logical to also believe that there had to be a Big Banger, G-d. The question, that logically follows is, “Then who created G-d?” This is discussed by Aristotle and the Maimonides in the description of the Prime Mover, the one thing in the world that cannot be moved and was not created by something else, (i.e., G-d Himself).³ In addition, when speaking about creating anything in the world, everything that is referred to is a physical object in the universe, including the universe itself. Since, by definition, G-d is not a physical being, the question of who created G-d, a spiritual entity, is not an equivalent question, but is, rather, a non-starter. A non-physical, spiritual being can be eternal without causing a conflict, but since every physical object in the universe has a cause, it is logical to say that everything else in the physical realm also had a cause, including the creation of the universe itself. Finally, it is preferable and more logical to believe in a non-physical being who is eternal than to believe in a physical world that is eternal and unchanging, when we know that the world and the universe by definition continues to decay and is always changing.

THE TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

If after a great avalanche a person travel to that area and finds among the giant rocks a letter “H” formed by many boulders sitting on the ground, he or she may think it is a great coincidence. But as the individual keeps travelling, he or she then finds exactly 50 feet further (again formed by boulders) the letter “E”. Fifty feet later, the letter “L” is formed in a similar fashion, then after another 50 feet there is another “L,” and finally 50 feet further on there is an “O.” It certainly could be analyzed as a great coincidence, a random accident, that the boulders all happened to fall this way and just happened to be placed exactly 50 feet apart and coincidentally spelled out the word “HELLO.” But it is far more logical to believe that an intelligent being intentionally formed these letters and then placed them there for someone to see and read. This, essentially, is the Teleological argument. The design and perfection in nature and in the world could indeed be accidental. But it is more logical to believe that a designer created it that way intentionally. If the person then continues walking and sees more words, such as “HOW ARE YOU?” and then “HAVE A NICE DAY”, with each letter sitting exactly 50 feet apart from the next, the more a person observes, the more he or she has to conclude that all this is not an accident, but it was put there intentionally. Of course, the opposite theory is that a billion monkeys with a billion computers in a

² Maimonides, Book of Commandments, Commandment #1

³ Maimonides, Guide for the Perplexed II:1

billion years will eventually type out Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, and this is certainly a possibility, especially with so many chances to get it wrong before getting it right. But it seems to be far more logical that all the design in the world and in nature was purposeful rather than accidental. A few concrete examples of this idea (macro and micro) should elucidate this argument further.

The Earth's size is perfect for life to exist as it does. The Earth's dimensions and corresponding gravity holds a thin layer of mostly nitrogen and oxygen gases, extending only about 50 miles above the Earth's surface. If Earth were smaller, an atmosphere would be impossible, like the situation of the planet Mercury. If Earth were larger, its atmosphere would contain free hydrogen, like Jupiter's atmosphere does. Earth is the only known planet equipped with an atmosphere of the right mixture of gases to sustain plant, animal and human life. The Earth is located in the right distance from the sun. Consider the temperature swings the earth encounters, roughly -30 degrees to +120 degrees (Fahrenheit). If the Earth were any further away from the sun, we would all freeze. Any closer and we would burn up. Even a fractional variance in the Earth's position to the sun would make life on Earth impossible. The Earth remains this perfect distance from the sun while it rotates around the sun at a speed of nearly 67,000 mph. It is also rotating on its axis, allowing the entire surface of the Earth to be properly warmed and cooled every day. It is far more logical to say that all this was created intentionally in order to allow life to thrive on this planet, rather than conclude that all these details are mere accidents of nature.

Similarly, water is colorless, odorless, without taste, and yet no living thing can survive without it. Plants, animals and human beings consist mostly of water. (About two-thirds of the human body is water.) The characteristics of water are uniquely suited to life: It has an unusually high boiling point and low freezing point. Water allows us to live in an environment of fluctuating temperature changes, while keeping our bodies a steady 98.6 degrees (Fahrenheit). Water is a universal solvent. This property means that thousands of chemicals, minerals and nutrients can be carried throughout our bodies and into the smallest blood vessels. Water is also chemically neutral. Without affecting the makeup of the substances it carries, water enables food, medicines and minerals to be absorbed and used by the body. Water has a unique surface tension. Therefore, in plants, water can flow upward against gravity, bringing life-giving water and nutrients to the top of even the tallest trees. Water freezes from the top down and floats, so fish can live in the winter. Ninety-seven percent of the Earth's water is in the oceans. But on our Earth, there is a system designed which removes salt from the water and then distributes that water throughout the globe. Evaporation takes the ocean waters, leaving the salt, and forms clouds which are easily moved by the wind to disperse water over the land for vegetation, animals and people. It is a system of purification and supply that sustains life on this planet, a system of recycled and reused water. The chances that this universal life giver, water, developed all these characteristics randomly rather than by design is less logical than saying G-d created water in this manner in order for life to be sustained.

Now, consider the banana. When it is green and unripe, the color tells humans that it is unsafe to eat it. It is difficult to pick a single banana off the bunch at this point and it is likewise almost impossible to peel. If one eats it at that point, he or she will get a stomach ache. The banana "knows" that humans will be able to detect color change, and that their hands can detach one banana from the bunch. It has a sweet taste so that man's taste buds allow him to enjoy the fruit, which gives nutrition to the body. It is far more logical to say that the banana was created with all these characteristics, rather than that they are all accidental and evolved gradually.

PASCAL'S WAGER

This is not an argument to show that G-d probably exists. Rather, it argues why a person should live his or her life as if G-d exists and the Torah came from G-d. The seventeenth century physicist, Blaise Pascal, who was also a mathematician and philosopher, was a deeply religious man. He posited that either G-d exists and (from a Jewish perspective) gave the Torah and its commandments, or G-d does not exist. If a person is a betting individual, it is far better and "safer" to live one's life as a religious person. Why? If G-d does not exist, and a person has lived his or her life observing all the commandments, then at worst, he or she wasted some time performing meaningless rituals, but nevertheless lived an ethical life helping others (which is commanded by the Torah). However, if a person chooses to ignore G-d and the Torah but later finds out that G-d indeed exists, that person is then held accountable for every action or inaction, every sin and commandment. He or she will spend

an eternity paying for his or her indifference to G-d while alive. Therefore, it is a far safer “bet” to live one’s life as a believing and practicing Jew.

THE MORAL ARGUMENT

In Nazi Germany, it was both legal and “ethical” to hurt or even kill a Jew, based on that society’s system of “morals.” If there is no being higher than all other human beings dictating what is considered moral and ethical, then human beings can indeed disagree about what is considered moral, so that (in certain societies) the killing of innocents will be deemed correct and the right thing to do. Only if a G-d exists who establishes a morality for all mankind, greater than any one country’s or any one society’s own laws, can there be universal moral standards. In effect, the Nuremberg trials of 1946 established this concept of a greater morality that must be observed by all human beings (and that must be based on the idea of a deity) when it established that German officers and judges should not have obeyed the laws of Nazi Germany, and that they were morally wrong and could be held accountable for doing so.

THE BEAUTY ARGUMENT

If all existence is truly an accident, then anything that we call beautiful in nature (like a sunset, a butterfly, a flower, etc.) is only due to a random combination of colors, shape and form. It is not “meant” to be truly beautiful, as it occurred randomly. Thus, all beauty in the world is not actual beauty, but a random coincidence of nature. It is far easier to believe that the beauty that people enjoy daily in nature was intended to be beautiful and intended to be enjoyed by man.

THE MEANING OF LIFE ARGUMENT

If G-d does not exist and the world just developed randomly, then there is no specific purpose to my life, your life, or any human being’s life. No more or less than any flower, each human being is born and then dies, without any goal, objective or rationale for that existence. Any purpose we give to our lives is not real without a G-d, since there is no intention and purpose in the universe. It is very difficult to live 70 or one hundred years on earth and believe that there is no specific purpose to one’s existence. Only if one believes in a G-d who put each person in the world to achieve a specific objective, can life have true meaning.

THE ARGUMENT OF JEWISH ETERNITY

King Fredrick the Great once asked his Lutheran pastor to provide him with concrete proof of G-d’s existence in just two words. The pastor answered, “The Jews.” The continued existence of the Jewish people defies logic. With the destruction of the central focus of their religion (the Temple), banned from their land (the Land of Israel), and as a hated minority in almost every country they lived, which resulted in their expulsion from more than eighty countries, the Jewish people should have disappeared from history, certainly faster than the Greeks, Romans and every other culture that dominated the world at one point or another. Yet the Jewish people and their culture survive intact today, while these other great civilizations have disappeared. The survival of the Jews points to G-d’s invisible Hand in history. The illogic of Jewish existence points to a Divine guidance and covenant that would not let the Jews, as a people, disappear.

The famed Mark Twain wrote about this concept and phenomenon in 1898:⁴ “If the statistics are right, the Jews constitute but one per cent of the human race. It suggests a nebulous dim puff of star-dust lost in the blaze of the Milky Way. Properly the Jew ought hardly to be heard of; but he is heard of, has always been heard of. He is as prominent on the planet as any other people, and his commercial importance is extravagantly out of proportion to the smallness of his bulk. His contributions to the world’s list of great names in literature, science, art, music, finance, medicine, and abstruse learning are also away out of proportion to the weakness of his numbers.

“He has made a marvelous fight in this world, in all the ages; and has done it with his hands tied behind him. He could be vain of himself, and be excused for it. The Egyptian, the Babylonian, and the Persian rose, filled the planet with sound and splendor, then faded to dream-stuff and passed away; the Greek and the Roman

⁴ “Concerning the Jews”, Harper Magazine, March, 1898

followed, and made a vast noise, and they are gone; other peoples have sprung up and held their torch high for a time, but it burned out, and they sit in twilight now, or have vanished.

“The Jew saw them all, beat them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert and aggressive mind. All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?”

EVIL VS. EVERYTHING ELSE ARGUMENT

A contemporary rabbi described quite succinctly the intellectual battle about whether G-d exists in the world or not: “For those who believe, they have to justify and explain the problem of evil in the world. For those who do not believe, they have to justify and explain everything else.” In other words, people who believe in G-d have to wrestle with the moral problem and understanding how G-d can let bad things happen to good people and vice versa. For those people who deny G-d, they have to explain everything else in the world that seems to make sense, give pleasure, make life worth living, etc. It is far easier to cope with the problem of the existence of evil than it is to have to justify and explain everything else in the world.

THE SEVEN-DAY WEEK

Almost every aspect of time measurement is connected to an astronomical phenomenon. The twenty-four hour day measures the time it takes for the earth to rotate exactly one time on its axis vis-a-vis the sun. A month is approximately the time it takes for the moon to circle and revolve around the earth. A year measures the time that the earth revolves around the sun. Only one measurement does not correspond to any astronomical event – the week. The 29 ½ day month could have been divided many ways (three ten-day periods, five six-day periods, etc.). Why, then, is it that almost every society in the world since man's existence and recorded history follows a seven-day week?

The only explanation and earliest mention of a seven-day week is the creation of the world. Thus, the fact that from the thousands of societies that have existed throughout history, almost all cultures have observed the seven-day week. (There are very few exceptions, which proves the rule, such as one small tribe in Nigeria with a four-day week, the Javanese in Indonesia with a five-day week, another tribe in West Africa that tried a six-day week and one group in ancient Japan that experimented with a ten-day week.) This almost universal agreement goes back to an understanding that this unit of time signifies the time that it took G-d to create the universe and set nature into motion. The Jews celebrate this fact every week with the observance of the Shabbat, but the very idea of a seven-day week demonstrates an acknowledgement of G-d's Creation. Kuzari brings this argument⁵ to show that G-d must have created the world in seven days, and since all people at the beginning of recorded time knew about this, they adopted the seven-day week as their unit of measurement. In fact, Communist Russia tried briefly in the early 1930's to eliminate the seven-day week and make it only five days (in order to eliminate any notion of G-d in that society), but this experiment quickly fell apart and was abandoned after two years.

THE ARGUMENTS OF THE DIVINITY OF THE TORAH

Shemittah-Seventh Year and Jubilee

Either the Torah was given by G-d to the Jewish people, or it was devised and written by one or more very bright human beings. One of the 613 Torah commandments is to leave the ground fallow once every seven years and not plant at all.⁶ In addition, during the fiftieth Jubilee year, which occurs immediately after the 49th year, which is a Shemittah-Seventh Year, it is also forbidden to plant any field.⁷ How are people supposed to eat every eighth year without planting in the seventh year, especially in ancient times when people never imported food from abroad? Moreover, how could people in an agrarian society have enough food to survive in the year following the Jubilee year, after not planting for two consecutive years? The Torah itself says that people will ask

⁵ Kuzari, Section 1:57-60

⁶ Leviticus 25:3-5

⁷ Midrash, Sifra Behar 3:7, Maimonides, Hilchot Shemittah VeYovel 10:16

this question. And G-d promises that he will provide enough food in the sixth year to last until the end of the eighth year, when the new crop will be ready.⁸ Which crazy human being would write such a law and make such a promise? After the first Shemithah-Seventh Year, the people would have nothing to eat and stop following the Torah laws. They would rebel against their leaders. And if they did not do so after the Shemithah year, then they certainly would after the first Jubilee year when they would either starve or abandon the Torah. And, yet, we find no rebellion by the people and no abandonment of Torah observance. Somehow, G-d kept His promise and the people did not starve. While it is true that in the time of the Second Temple general non-observance included disobeying the Shemithah laws, this still does not impact upon the argument. No sane human being would ever compose a book that commanded the people not to plant their fields for a year, and he or she would certainly not promise that everything will be fine. The fact that it is written and commanded in the Torah demonstrates that only G-d could write something so radical and promise something that only He can keep.

Three Times a Year to the Temple

Another illogical Jewish law, during Temple times, was the obligation of all Jews to come to Jerusalem to celebrate the holidays of Passover, Shavuot and Sukkot together.⁹ If everyone in the country was in Jerusalem celebrating, who was watching the borders? While it is true that only the males were commanded to gather in Jerusalem, in practice families went together to celebrate, especially on Passover when the Paschal sacrifice had to be eaten as a family. And even if only the males went to Jerusalem, the question still remains how they could leave their defenseless wives and children unprotected. Certainly, the enemies of the Jews knew about this practice, and if all the people (or even just the males) were out of their homes, they were practically “inviting” the enemies to overrun the country and loot their possessions. And, yet, this never happened. Once again, which human being writing a Torah would be so foolish to devise a commandment for all the people to abandon their homes and leave themselves unprotected? Thus, only G-d could be able to command such a practice and not have to “worry” about the enemies. In fact, G-d, once again, promises the Jewish people in Scripture that they have nothing to worry about regarding an enemy invasion while they come to worship as a nation in Jerusalem.¹⁰ No sane human being would ever write such a command nor make such a promise.

Revelation to THREE Million People

In almost every religion, there is one person or a series of people who claim that G-d spoke to them as individual prophets, and they transmit G-d’s wishes to the people. While Judaism has this system as well, it is almost impossible to check if G-d actually spoke to these people or not, and usually it was the charisma of the prophets that convinced the people of their veracity. (Judaism also devised a method to test each prophet by making him or her perform supernatural miracles on demand – see chapter on “Prophecy”.) But only Judaism, out of any religion in the world, claims that G-d spoke to the entire people, approximately three million human beings (603,550 men between the age of 20 and 60). This claim would indeed be very difficult to fabricate. If a group of people came together to write the Torah and wrote that G-d spoke to the entire people when He did not, some of the Jews (even later on) would inevitably say “I never heard of this great event from my grandparents or ancestors. This is a lie.” The fact that all Jews agreed that this momentous event took place (which was the only time in history that G-d spoke to an entire people) and no one disputes this fact (even later religions, such as Christianity, attest to this event), demonstrates that it actually happened, and it was not concocted by humans who later wrote the Torah. No one could write such a thing if it did not in fact take place, as people would certainly have disputed its veracity.

The Four Exceptions Argument of Kosher Animals

In discussing which animals are Kosher, the Torah requires that each animal has two specific signs: that the animal chews its cud (i.e., regurgitates its food a number of times before full digestion) and has split hooves.¹¹ It turns out that all animals in the world either have both of these signs of being Kosher or they have neither sign – with only four exceptions. The Torah spells out the four exceptions that have only one sign, and

⁸ Leviticus 25:19-22

⁹ Exodus 23:17, 34:23

¹⁰ Exodus 34:24

¹¹ Leviticus 11:2-3

specifically says “Ach-However,” indicating that these are the only animals that have one Kosher sign but not both: the fox, camel, rock badger (rabbit) and the pig.¹² Later on, the Torah again repeats that these four animals are the only exceptions in the world to the rule of animals having either both kosher signs or no Kosher signs at all.¹³ If a human being was writing the Torah, how in the world could he or she make such a bold claim? How could anyone know that on the entire earth, there were no more animals except these four that have one Kosher symbol but not both? As soon as a fifth exception would be found, the fraud of the Torah’s human writer would be exposed. In addition, no one would be so stupid to make such a claim without having searched the entire planet for all the different species of animals. And yet, since that writing of the Torah over 3,000 years ago, no fifth species has been found at all. Not in Africa, Australia or any other continent, which were unknown to human beings in the Middle East at the time the Torah was written. Only G-d would make such a claim and write something which no man could possibly know.

THE ARGUMENTS FOR THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE ORAL LAW

Over the years, numerous Jewish groups have challenged the authority of the rabbis and the validity of the Oral Torah that traditional Jews claim was given at the same time as the Written Torah and passed down from generation to generation.¹⁴ Once again, these ideas are not “proofs” that cannot be absolutely demonstrated beyond any shadow of doubt. But these are arguments demonstrating that it is more rational to believe that an Oral Law had to be present in the time of Moses, rather than created much later on by the rabbis. Traditional Judaism believes that the Written Torah is like the notes of a class which was taught orally. After hearing the class, the written notes help reconstruct what was said orally, but unless the person was present for the class itself, the written notes by themselves seem meaningless or cannot be understood altogether.

“As I have Previously Commanded”

Regarding the commandment of ritual slaughter of a Kosher animal, the Torah says “You shall slaughter it... as I have previously commanded.”¹⁵ And yet, we find no record in the Written Torah of any previous reference to ritual slaughter and its laws. Thus, the reference to a previous discussion had to be an oral one, not written in the Torah, and a discussion of those laws not written down but passed down orally (until the Talmud-Oral Law was eventually written many hundreds of years later).

All Tefillin Are Black and Square

The Written Torah commands Jews to put *Totafot* (not a Hebrew word) between their eyes.¹⁶ It does not describe the details of what this signifies. And yet, although there are many arguments in the Oral Law found in every page of the Talmud (how these arguments came about if the Oral Law was passed down, is a discussion beyond the scope of this book), there is no argument whatsoever about the basic facts of what the Tefillin are. Even though not one of the laws of Tefillin is written in the Torah, everyone agrees that the Tefillin must be painted black on the outside. (No one says that they should be green or a different color.) All agree that the shape of the Tefillin is square, and what is written are four parchments from the Written Torah (there is an argument about the order of these Torah portions but not what they are), and all agree the Tefillin are not worn between the eyes, against what the verse seems to command, but rather at the hairline. How did the Jewish people know all these laws? What did they wear each day in the desert or in the generation right after the Torah was given? Obviously, when the Written Law was given, the Jews were also given a set of laws and many details that were not written, which explained the particular points of Jewish law not referred to at all in the Written Torah. The same idea can be applied to many other commandments whose details are not explained in the Written Torah. When the people surely asked, “What does this mean? How exactly are we to perform this commandment?” Moses must have explained all the details of each commandment to the people. These details are part of the Oral Law but not written in the Torah. For example, it merely says in the Torah “...on the seventh

¹² Leviticus 11:4-8

¹³ Deuteronomy 14:7-8

¹⁴ See Mishna Avot 1:1, which must refer to the Oral Torah since the Written Torah was given and taught to all the people and each tribe possessed its own copy [Deuteronomy 31:19, 22])

¹⁵ Deuteronomy 12:21

¹⁶ Deuteronomy 6:8

day it is Shabbat to G-d your L-rd, you shall not do any creative work...¹⁷” Moses had to be given the details of what was allowed and not allowed to be done on Shabbat. Except for a few references to not lighting a fire or not carrying, nothing is written in the Torah itself. The thousands of laws in the Oral Law had to be given by G-d to Moses at that time, and then explained to the people.

Therefore, although it is difficult, if not impossible, to prove that the Oral Law was given at the same time as the Written Law, it is more logical to believe that this is how it happened than it is to believe that the rabbis made it all up many years later. So, too, belief in the Divinity of the Torah seems to be more rational than the alternative explanation – that a person or group of people wrote it down later on. This also jives with the notion that, even though it cannot be absolutely proven, it is much more logical to believe in a G-d that gave each human being a purpose and meaning for his or her life, rather than a life without G-d that has no purpose and no true meaning, and a random universe.

Rabbi Dr. Nachum Amsel currently works with Rabbi Berel Wein and the Destiny Foundation as the Director of Education, whose mission is “to bring Jewish history to life in an exciting, entertaining and interactive way.” Rabbi Amsel has also served as a teacher, a school principal, and an adjunct professor. He has also taught over 2000 educators how to teach more effectively. Rabbi Amsel has worked in all areas of formal and informal Jewish education and has developed numerous curricula including a methodology how to teach Jewish Values using mass media. Recently, he founded the STARS Program (Student Torah Alliance for Russian Speakers), where more than 3000 students in 12 Russian speaking countries learn about their Jewish heritage for five hours weekly. Rabbi Amsel previously served as the Educational Director of Hillel in the Former Soviet Union. He lives Jerusalem with his wife and has four children and three grandchildren.

¹⁷ Exodus 20:9-10